

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/521,888

Examiner

Lucy Thomas

Applicant(s)

MAIER, THOMAS

Art Unit

2836

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment filed on 2/06/2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 9,10 and 12-18.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Discussion of Prior Art

1. Regarding Claim 9, the closest Prior Art, Hanzawa et al. US 6,538,866 discloses a sensor protection circuit 1 (Figures 1, 3-7, 10) for at least one sensor F1, the protection circuit which comprises at least one supply line VCCS for supplying current to the sensor, a current measuring unit 3 for detecting an electric current flowing through said supply line for preventing damage to the sensor from excess voltage, and said current measuring unit having connected thereto at least one of a current limiting device 4 for limiting the electric current and a circuit element M2 for disconnecting said at least one supply line (Column 4, lines 1-10, 17-26, 37-54). Hanzawa et al. does not disclose a separate control input connected to the circuit element, in case of a short circuit lasting for a predetermined period of time the separate control input driving the circuit element into a non-conducting state resulting in the at least one supply line being disconnected. This limitation, in combination with the other recited limitation is not disclosed by the Prior Art of Record. Claims 10, 12-16, and 18 depend on Claim 9.

Regarding Claim 17, Hanzawa et al. discloses a sensor protection circuit 1 (Figures 1, 3-7, 10) for at least one sensor F1, the protection circuit which comprises at least one supply line VCCS for supplying current to the sensor, a current measuring unit 3 for detecting an electric current flowing through said supply line for preventing damage to the sensor from excess voltage, and said current measuring unit having connected thereto at least one of a current limiting device 4 for limiting the electric current and a circuit element M2 for disconnecting said at least one supply line; and

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means for preventing excess voltages connected in at least one of said voltage line, said ground line, and a signal connected to the sensor, said means having at least one of a Zener diode ZD1 (see Figure 10) and at least one capacitor CC (see Figure 5) (Column 4, lines 1-10, 17-26, 37-54). Claim 17 further adds that the sensor comprises at least one Zener diode for short circuit protection with a higher breakdown voltage than the Zener diode for preventing excess voltages, and the reference does not teach this limitation. The limitation, in combination with the other recited limitations is not disclosed by the Prior Art of Record.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lucy Thomas whose telephone number is 571-272-6002. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Sircus can be reached on 571-272-2058. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LT

March 31, 2005



PHUONG T. VU
PRIMARY EXAMINER